



Client – Shirley Hughes

Site – Pines

Reference – 20230091-PRA

Location – Rossett, Wrexham

Central Grid Reference – SJ 35851 57397

Date – 20th November 2023

Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA)

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Revision: 1

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In line with Chartered Institute of Environmental and Ecological Management (CIEEM) recommendations the findings of this survey are deemed valid for 18 months from the date of the survey.

1. Summary

Purpose	Planning permission is being sought for renovation works to Pines in Rossett, including demolition of the existing garage, the construction of new extensions and the rendering of the entire building. A Preliminary Roost Assessment was commissioned to support the application for planning permission.
Results	No existing records of designated sites were identified within 500m of the site and there are no records of roosting bats or birds relating to the building covered by the survey. The building was assessed to provide negligible potential to support roosting bats. Small voids were identified to be present in the rear of the building although an inspection of the voids revealed no bat field signs to imply previous roosting activity. The land surrounding the building comprises established gardens, hedgerows and mature trees and was therefore assessed to provide a moderate value foraging and commuting habitat for bats. The building was assessed to provide occasional opportunities for nesting birds with an old nest structure identified in a void in the brickwork during the survey.
Recommendations	It is recommended that the works on the building commence with care due to the potential for opportunistic bats to be present. It is recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme, in line with Bat Conservation Trust and Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidance is implemented during all phases of the renovation. It is recommended that any works that commence on the building during the nesting season are immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey, carried out by a suitably experienced surveyor. Any nests identified must remain undisturbed until the young have fledged from the nest. It is recommended that consideration is given to including enhancements in the building for roosting bats and nesting birds.
Conclusions	If precautionary measures and a sensitive lighting scheme are implemented during the renovation works, the impact of the renovation on roosting bats and nesting birds is likely to be negligible.

2. Introduction

2.1. Purpose

2.1.1. Planning permission is being sought for renovation works to Pines in Rossett, including demolition of the existing garage, the construction of new extensions and the rendering of the entire building.

2.1.2. A Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was commissioned to support the application for planning permission.

2.2. Site Description and Location

2.2.1. The site is Pines, a residential property in Rossett near Wrexham that comprises an existing residential dwelling and surrounding decorative gardens.

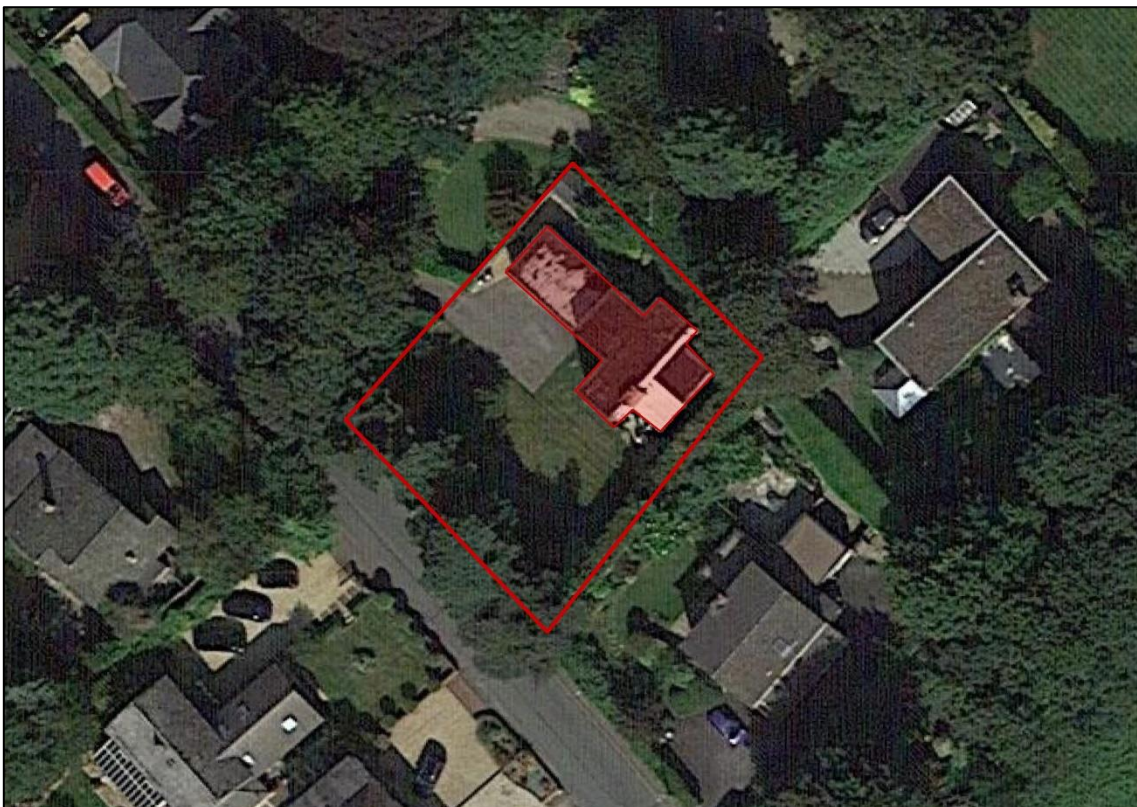


Figure 1: Showing the red line boundary and location of the building covered by this survey.

2.2.2. The building comprises a predominantly two-storey residential dwelling with a single storey area and uPVC conservatory on its southeast elevation and a single storey garage on its northwest elevation.

2.2.3. The walls of the building comprise brick cavity walls with uPVC windows and doors throughout and areas of decorative uPVC cladding.

2.2.4. The roof of the building comprises flat felt covered roofs over the main property and garage and a sloping polycarbonate roof over the conservatory.

2.2.5. Internally the building comprises separated rooms making up the living space with the garage comprising a single room. There are no separated roof voids within the building.



Figure 2: The building viewed from the west.



Figure 3: The building viewed from the southwest.



Figure 4: The roof of the building.

2.2.6. The land immediately surrounding the property comprises further residential properties surrounded by established gardens and tree lines to the north, east and south with Burton Road to the west, with further residential properties beyond.

2.2.7. The wider surrounding area comprises a mixture of open farmland and small pockets of urban land with the A483 running north to south through the area. The village of Rossett is located 750m to the east, on the opposite side of the A483.



Figure 5: Showing the building in context with the wider surrounding area.

2.3. Proposals

2.3.1. The proposals are to renovate the building, including the demolition of the existing garage, the construction of new extensions to the building and the external rendering of the entire building.

2.3.2. The plans in Appendix I of this report show existing and proposed building elevations.

3. Methodology

3.1. Desk Study

3.1.1. A desk study to identify existing records of designated sites, bats and roof nesting birds within 500m of the survey area was carried out with Cofnod.

3.2. Field Study

3.2.1. A field survey of the site was undertaken by Steven Whitcher (MCIEEM) on the 17th November 2023. The Preliminary Roost Assessment (PRA) was carried out in accordance with the Bat Conservation Trust Good Practice Guidelines, 4th edition (2023) and was also advised by BTHK Bat Roosts in Trees - A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals (2018) and BRHK Bat Roosts in Rock – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Climbers, Cavers & Ecology Professionals (2021).

3.2.2. The weather at the time of the survey fine, clear and still (BWS-0) following a light frost with a temperature of 6°C.

3.2.3. During the survey all buildings, structures and trees were searched for bat roosting potential or evidence of existing roosts, including:

- Checking buildings, structure and trees for cracks, voids or other Potential Roost Features (PRF).
- Looking for signs of staining or worn areas indicating a roost entrance.
- Searching for droppings, foraging remains such as wings or other field signs.

3.2.4. The inspection included a visual inspection using a bright torch (1 million candle power), ladders and also an inspection with binoculars, a pole camera and an endoscope, where applicable.

3.2.5. The habitat around the site was also assessed for its suitability to support foraging and commuting bats by looking at the value of the surrounding habitat and the connectivity of the site to the wider area.

3.3. Limitations/Constraints

3.3.1. This PRA was carried out as a daytime survey and therefore does not provide accurate information on bat emergence or entry or on foraging and commuting activity in the surrounding area.

4. Results and Interpretation

4.1. Desk Study

4.1.1. Cofnod did not return any existing records of statutory or non-statutory designated sites within the 500m search area. The closest statutory designated site shown on the MAGIC website comprises Marford Quarry Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which is located 1km to the south and designated for the habitats present and the species the habitats support, notably invertebrates.

4.1.2. Cofnod returned occasional historic records of bats within the 500m search area, although no records specific to the building covered by this survey. The closest records refer to the historic presence (1987) of common pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus pipistrellus*) located 300m to the east.

4.1.3. Cofnod returned occasional records of bird species within the 500m search area, although no records specific to the building covered by this survey. The closest records refer to field records of swift (*Apus apus*), a species listed as red on the UK Birds of Conservation Concern (BoCC) list, 100m to the west.

4.2. Field Study

4.2.1. The walls of the building were generally found to be in a good condition with no major cracks or voids in the brickwork and the windows and doors intact and sealed.

4.2.2. To the rear of the garage an area of missing uPVC cladding was identified, exposing the brickwork behind. The area was inspected and no significant cracks or voids that would provide opportunities for bats were present.

4.2.3. Two further holes were identified in areas of uPVC cladding to the rear of the building. One comprised a square hole adjacent to the rear door of the property located at a height of approximately 1m. The hole extended through the wall due to something, potentially an old vent, having previously been fitted in the location.



Figure 6: Missing uPVC cladding to the rear of the garage.



Figure 7: Holes adjacent to the rear door.

4.2.4. The hole was thoroughly inspected with an endoscope and was identified to comprise a hole through the concrete blocks of the wall with no significant voids or direct access to the cavity present. No field signs were identified within the void to imply use by bats.

4.2.5. The other hole comprised a small hole in the uPVC cladding. The hole opened into a void in the brickwork with an old nest, anecdotally reported by the owner as a robin (*Erithacus rubecula*) nest, present in the void. A thorough inspection of the void was carried out and no bats or other bat field signs were identified.



Figure 8: The holes in the uPVC cladding.



Figure 9: The hole in the soffit over the garage door.

4.2.6. A further small void was identified in the corner of the boxed soffit over the garage door. The void was inspected and the cavity was found to be densely covered with cobwebs, implying nothing had entered the hole, with no bat field signs identified.

4.2.7. The roof of the building was found to be completely unsuitable for roosting bats with the only voids present being voids underneath the metal edging of the roof. These voids were inspected and found to be shallow, providing negligible potential for roosting bats.

4.2.8. The interior of the garage was inspected and found to be used for general storage and to house the boiler for the property. No bat field signs were identified within the garage.

4.2.9. Overall, the building was assessed to provide negligible potential to support roosting bats. Small voids were identified to be present in the rear of the building although an inspection of the voids revealed no bat field signs to imply previous roosting activity.

4.2.10. Therefore, it is assessed as unlikely that the proposed renovation works will have an impact on roosting bats, with precautionary working methods further reducing the likely impacts.

4.2.11. The land surrounding the building comprised established gardens, hedgerows and mature trees and was therefore assessed to provide a moderate value foraging and commuting habitat for bats. A thorough assessment of the foraging and commuting activity on and around the site was not carried out as part of the survey.

4.2.12. The proposed works do not include the removal of areas of vegetation and therefore if a sensitive lighting scheme is implemented during all phases of the development the impact on foraging and commuting bats is likely to be negligible.

4.2.13. An old nest, anecdotally reported to be a robin nest, was identified in one of the voids on the rear of the building, showing that birds have previously nested in the building. The nest showed no signs of fresh material to imply nesting in the recent season, which fits with the owners reports that the nest was occupied several years ago.

4.2.14. The voids in the building provide nesting opportunities for several species of bird. Therefore, if the renovation works commence during the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year, the works may have an impact on nesting birds, if they are present in the building at that time.

5. Recommendations

5.1.1. The building was assessed to provide negligible potential to support roosting bats and therefore, in line with the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) Good Practice Guidelines (2023), there is no requirement for further bat surveys or a Natural Resources Wales (NRW) licence to cover the proposed works.

5.1.2. It is recommended that works on the building commence with care, particularly in the area of the voids to the rear of the building. In the event that any bats or bat field signs are encountered it is recommended that all works on the building cease and further advice is sought.

5.1.3. It is recommended that consideration is given to including at least one roost feature, in the form of an integrated bat box, in the building during the renovation works, as an enhancement for roosting bats.

5.1.4. It is recommended that a sensitive lighting scheme, in line with BCT and Institute of Lighting Professionals (ILP) Guidance (2023) is implemented during all phases of the renovation.

5.1.5. It is recommended that any works that commence on the building during the nesting season, which extends from March to September each year, are immediately preceded by a thorough nesting bird survey, carried out by a suitably experienced surveyor. Any nests identified must remain undisturbed until the young have fledged from the nest.

5.1.6. It is recommended that consideration is given to including at least one nesting feature, in the form of an integrated bird box, in the building during the renovation works, as an enhancement for nesting birds.

6. Conclusions

6.1. If precautionary measures and a sensitive lighting scheme are implemented during the renovation works, the impact of the renovation on roosting bats and nesting birds is likely to be negligible.

7. References

BTHK (2018). Bat Roosts in Trees – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Tree-Care and Ecology Professionals. Exeter: Pelagic Publishing.

BRHK (2021). Bat Roosts in Rock – A Guide to Identification and Assessment for Climbers, Cavers & Ecology Professionals. Pelagic Publishing, Exeter.

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Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2017/1012/contents/made> (Accessed 20th March 2023).

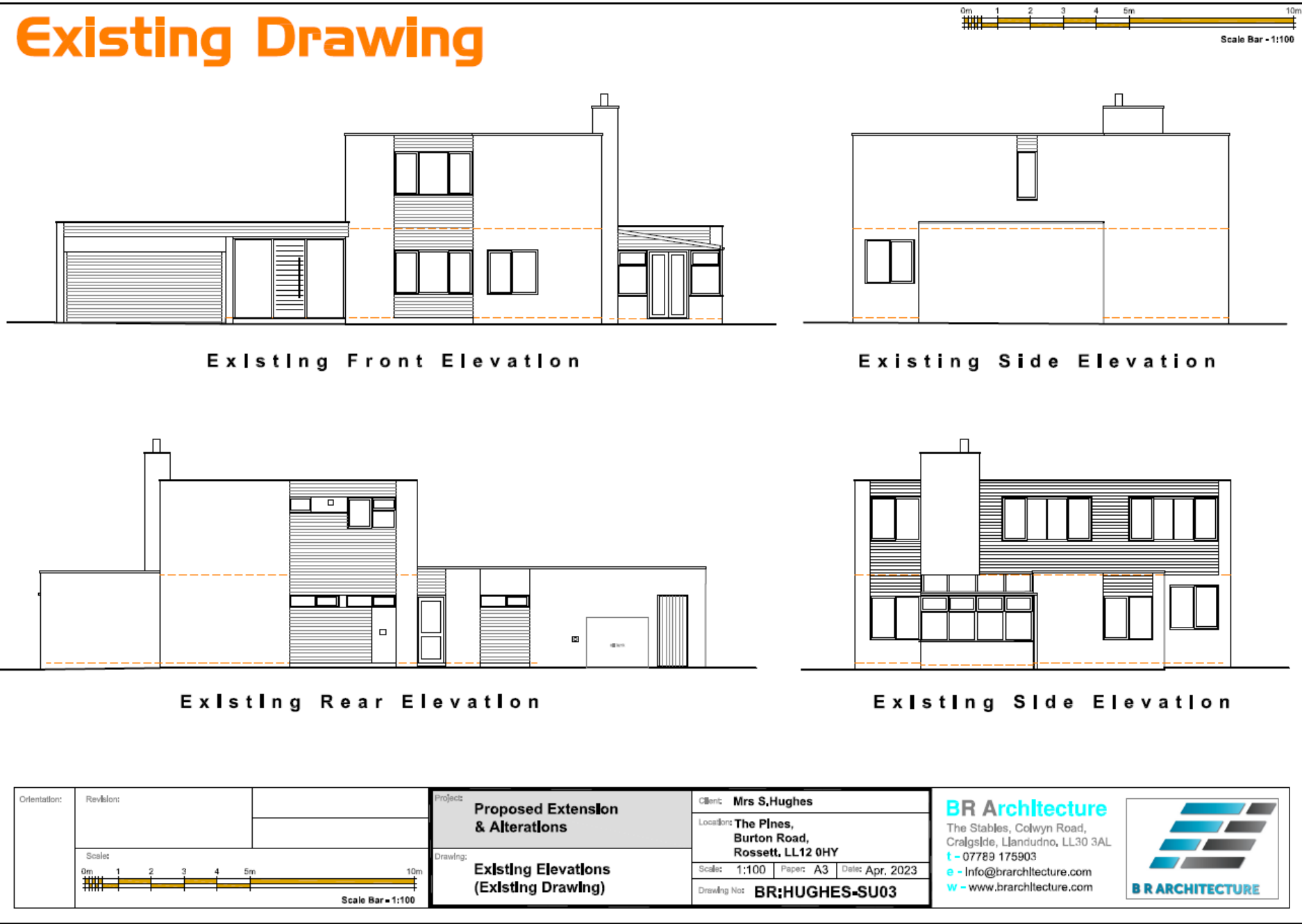
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The Habitats Directive. Available at http://www.ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/legislation/habitatsdirective/index_en.htm (Accessed 20th March 2023).

National Planning Policy Framework (2021). Available at <http://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework> (Accessed 20th March 2023).

Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006. Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents> (Accessed 20th March 2023).

The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. Available at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1981/69> (Accessed 20th March 2023).





Appendix II: Planning Policy and Species Legislation Summary

1. Planning Policy

1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the governments planning policies and how they should be applied. Section 15 of the policies refers to 'Conserving and enhancement the natural environment'. This outlines how local authorities should deal with biodiversity when considering planning applications.

1.2. NPPF paragraph 180 States:

When determining planning applications, local planning authorities should apply the following principles:

- a) If significant harm to biodiversity resulting from a development cannot be avoided (through locating on an alternative site with less harmful impacts), adequately mitigated, or, as a last resort, compensated for, then planning permission should be refused;*
- b) Development on land within or outside a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and which is likely to have an adverse effect on it (either individually or in combination with other developments), should not normally be permitted. The only exception is where the benefits of the development in the location proposed clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site that make it of special interest, and any broader impacts on the national network of Sites of Special Scientific Interest;*
- c) Development resulting in the loss or deterioration of irreplaceable habitats (such as ancient woodland and ancient or veteran trees) should be refused, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation strategy exists; and*
- d) Development whose primary objective is to conserve or enhance biodiversity should be supported; while opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.*

2. Legislation Summary

Species	Legislation	Offences include
Bats	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)	- o Deliberately kill, injure or capture a bat; - o Deliberately disturb bats; - o Damage or destroy a breeding site or resting place of a bat.
	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	- o Obstruct access to any structure or place which any bat uses for shelter or protection; or - o Disturb any bat while occupying a structure or place which it uses for that purpose.
Birds	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	- o Intentionally kill, injure, or take any wild bird; - o Intentionally take, damage or destroy a nest of any such bird whilst it is in use or being built; or - o Intentionally take or destroy an egg of any such bird.

Local authorities therefore have a duty to consider protected species as a material consideration when assessing planning applications. The ODPM Government Circular 06/2005 states: *'It is essential that the presence or otherwise of protected species, and the extent that they may be affected by the proposed development, is established before the planning permission is granted, otherwise all relevant material considerations may not have been addressed in making the decision.'*